

Capsule Summary
SM-597
First Friendship U.M. Church
Ridge
Private

c. 1850s-1870s

Beginning in the 1820s, a growth in the number of Methodist worshipers in the area around Tall Pine (today known as Ridge, Maryland) precipitated the purchase of a one acre tract for a cemetery as well as "a house or place of worship for the use of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church." The trustees for the church, including McKay Briscoe, Benjamin Bennett, William B. Bennet, William P. Price, Thomas Freeman, Joshua Cullember, and William L. Biscoe, were given the property by Uriah and Ana Sword. By 1834, the deed of a neighboring property noted that it bordered on a lot "upon which Friendship Meeting House stands." While these documents confirm that a meeting house was standing by the 1830s, the present structure is actually a later replacement. Dating from 1850s-1870s, the present structure is a one story, gable front, three bay, frame building with a rectangular plan. Architectural evidence, namely the hewn, circular sawn, and pit-sawn, braced-frame construction, the uniformly fired bricks of the foundation, as well as fully formed cut nails found in the framing and circular sawn plaster lathe all confirm this time period of construction.

Much of the interior furnishings of the church have been modified or replaced since the 1850s-1870s. The St. Mary's Beacon noted on August 6, 1885, for instance, that the interior walls were plastered, the gallery was removed, and lamps were hung. In 1903, the Beacon recorded another series of renovations involved replacing the old doors and shutters, adding the currently matchstick wainscotting, and lowering the ceiling height. This renovation project was sponsored by a Mr. William Moore and the carpentry work done by a Mr. Cecil and Mr. Raleigh. In 1970 a church hall was added and in 1979, the church was renovated again as vinyl siding was placed on the exterior. While currently a part of the Lexington Park Charge, First Friendship United Methodist Church represents the oldest Methodist sanctuary remaining in use in St. Mary's County.

SM-597, First Frienship United Methodist Church
St. Mary's County
Maryland Comprehensive State Historic Preservation Data

Historic Context

Geographic Organization:

Western Shore

Chronological/Developmental Period:

Agricultural-Industrial Transition, 1815-1870
Industrial Urban Dominance, 1870-1930

Historic Period Theme:

Architecture
Religion

Resource Type

Category:

Building

Historic Environment:

Village

Historic Function and Use:

Church

Known Design Source:

None

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. SM-597

Magi No.

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic First Friendship United Methodist Church

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 13723 Point Lookout Road ☐ not for publication

city, town Ridge ☐ vicinity of congressional district 1

state Maryland county St. Mary's TM-71, B-7, P-121

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name First Friendship United Methodist Church

street & number telephone no.: 301-872-5881

city, town Ridge state and zip code MD 20680

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. St. Mary's County Courthouse liber MRF 130

street & number folio 272

city, town Leonardtown state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. SM-597

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Contributing Resource Count: 1

First Friendship United Methodist Church is located on the west side of Route 5 approximately 0.1 mile north of the intersection of Route 5 and Wynne Road in Ridge, Maryland. Situated on a relatively flat 2.126 acre lot, the church is oriented on a east/west axis. It is bordered to the south by a cemetery, to the north by several mobile and modular homes, to the east by Route 5 and to the west by a screen of trees.

The First Friendship Meeting House is a one story, gable front, three bay, frame building with a rectangular plan. Erected c. 1850s-1870s, the meeting house features a common brick bond foundation of uniformly fired bricks. The braced frame walls are covered with vinyl siding, the cornice is unenclosed, and the roof is covered with asphalt shingles.

The east/primary/gable end elevation is pierced by a centrally located paired set of elongated, c. 1903 three panel doors with a four-light transom overhead flanked on either side by six-over-six, double-hung sash windows--each window featuring vinyl louvered shutters. The cornice of this and every other elevation features decorative, scroll sawn false rafter tails. The soffit underneath the tails is composed of beaded matchstick. A louvered cupola or steeple with a cross on top is located at the apex of the gable roof. A one story c. 1970 church hall addition is located to the north of the main block.

The south or side elevation is pierced by three, six-over-six windows. To the west of the main block is a small one story, board-and-batten addition with a shed roof covered with asphalt shingles. The battens are attached to the framing with wire nails. This addition is pierced by a single board-and-batten door.

The west elevation features the rear of the shed addition and the rear gable end of the main block. The main block does not feature any openings but a exterior cinder block chimney flue extends up the wall. The c. 1970 church hall addition is situated to the north side of the elevation.

The north elevation consists of the gable end of the c. 1970 addition and the side of the main block. The church is pierced by two, six-over-six windows and a four-pane-over-three-panel door that connects the sanctuary to the modern hall.

The interior of the meeting house features four rooms. Upon entering the building there is a vestibule that permits entry to a coat room, crying rooms, and to the sanctuary as well. The entire interior of the sanctuary is sheathed with beaded matchstick or wainscoting that was installed c. 1903. A central aisle divides two sets of pews and leads directly to an altar that is raised one step above the floor. The altar is further demarcated by a modest communion rail. A pair of oil lamps, found in the attic of the building, currently hang from the ceiling along with more modern electric lighting.

Access into the attic space is achieved through a service panel located in the crying room. In the attic space, portions of the original interior as well as the roof construction can be seen. Originally, the church was plastered using circular sawn lathe attached to a pit sawn and hewn frame with mature cut nails. An 6 August 1885 issue of the St. Mary's Beacon notes that the walls

8. Significance

Survey No. SM-597

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☒ state ☒ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

Beginning in the 1820s, a growth in the number of Methodist worshipers in the area around Tall Pine (today known as Ridge, Maryland) precipitated the purchase of a one acre tract for a cemetery as well as "a house or place of worship for the use of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church." The trustees for the church, including McKay Briscoe, Benjamin Bennett, William B. Bennet, William P. Price, Thomas Freeman, Joshua Cullember, and William L. Biscoe, were given the property by Uriah and Ana Sword. By 1834, the deed of a neighboring property noted that it bordered on a lot "upon which Friendship Meeting House stands." While these documents confirm that a meeting house was standing by the 1830s, the present structure is actually a later replacement. Dating from 1850s-1870s, the present structure is a one story, gable front, three bay, frame building with a rectangular plan. Architectural evidence, namely the hewn, circular sawn, and pit-sawn, braced-frame construction, the uniformly fired bricks of the foundation, as well as fully formed cut nails found in the framing and circular sawn plaster lathe all confirm this time period of construction.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. SM-597

Patricia Biondi, "Our History — First Friendship & Friends," St. Mary's Chronicles V 33, #6, June 1985.
St. Mary's Beacon, v 41: 250, p 3, c 1, 6 August 1885.
NA, A History of Methodist Churches in St. Mary's County, Maryland (Leonardtown, MD: Printing Press, Inc., 1984), 12-13.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 2.12 acresQuadrangle name Point LookoutQuadrangle scale 1: 24 000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Same as per deed description.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kirk E. Ranzetta, Historic Sites Surveyororganization Dept. of Planning & Zoningdate November 1997street & number 22740 Washington Streettelephone 301-475-4662city or town Leonardtownstate Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DHCP/DHCD
100 COMMUNITY PLACE
CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023
514-7600

SM-597, First Friendship Methodist Church
St. Mary's County
7.1 Description

were plastered and the gallery was removed. This section of the meeting house was probably the gallery. There is evidence that this gallery was lit by at least one or possibly two windows that have since been removed. The framing of the meeting house is somewhat unique for St. Mary's County. It consists of hewn and pit sawn beams that are mortised and then tenoned using a series of cut nails instead of wood pegs. The original ceiling tie beams are half lapped over a wall plate. The wall plate also directly supports the rafters. The absence of a false plate in the roof framing construction is rare, raising questions as to the regional background of the church's builders.

Overall, the First Friendship Methodist Meeting House reflects several campaigns of architectural changes. After its initial construction it was modified in 1885 with the plastering of its interior and the removal of its gallery. It was changed again in 1903 when the doors and window shutters were replaced and the wainscotting was added. In 1970 a church hall was added and in 1979 the exterior clapboard siding was covered with vinyl siding.

— SM-597, First Friendship United Methodist Church
St. Mary's County
8.1 Significance

Chain-of-Title

(All deeds are located at the Land Records Office, St. Mary's County Courthouse, Leonardtown, Maryland unless otherwise noted.)

Reference: Liber MRF 130, Folio 272

Grantee: Friendship Methodist Church of Ridge, Incorporated

Grantor: State of Maryland

Date: September 1, 1965

Notes: This confirmatory deed issues a special warrent of resurvey. This new survey reveals that the property contains 2.126 acres

Reference: Liber JH 8, Folio 379-380

Grantee: McKey Briscoe, Benjamin Bennett, William B. Bennett, William P. Price, Thomas Freeman, Joshua Cullember, William L. Biscoe

Grantor: Uriah and Ana Sword

Date: August 1, 1829

Notes: The deed notes that the 1+ acre property is to be used for "a house or place of worship for the use of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Neighboring Property

— Reference: Liber JH 10, Folio 199

Grantee: William Langley

Grantor: William Gill

Date: December 8, 1834

Notes: The deed of this neighboring property notes that it borders on a lot "upon which Friendship Meeting House stands."

5780 N.W.
(ST. MARYS CTY)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

76° 22' 30"
38° 07' 30"

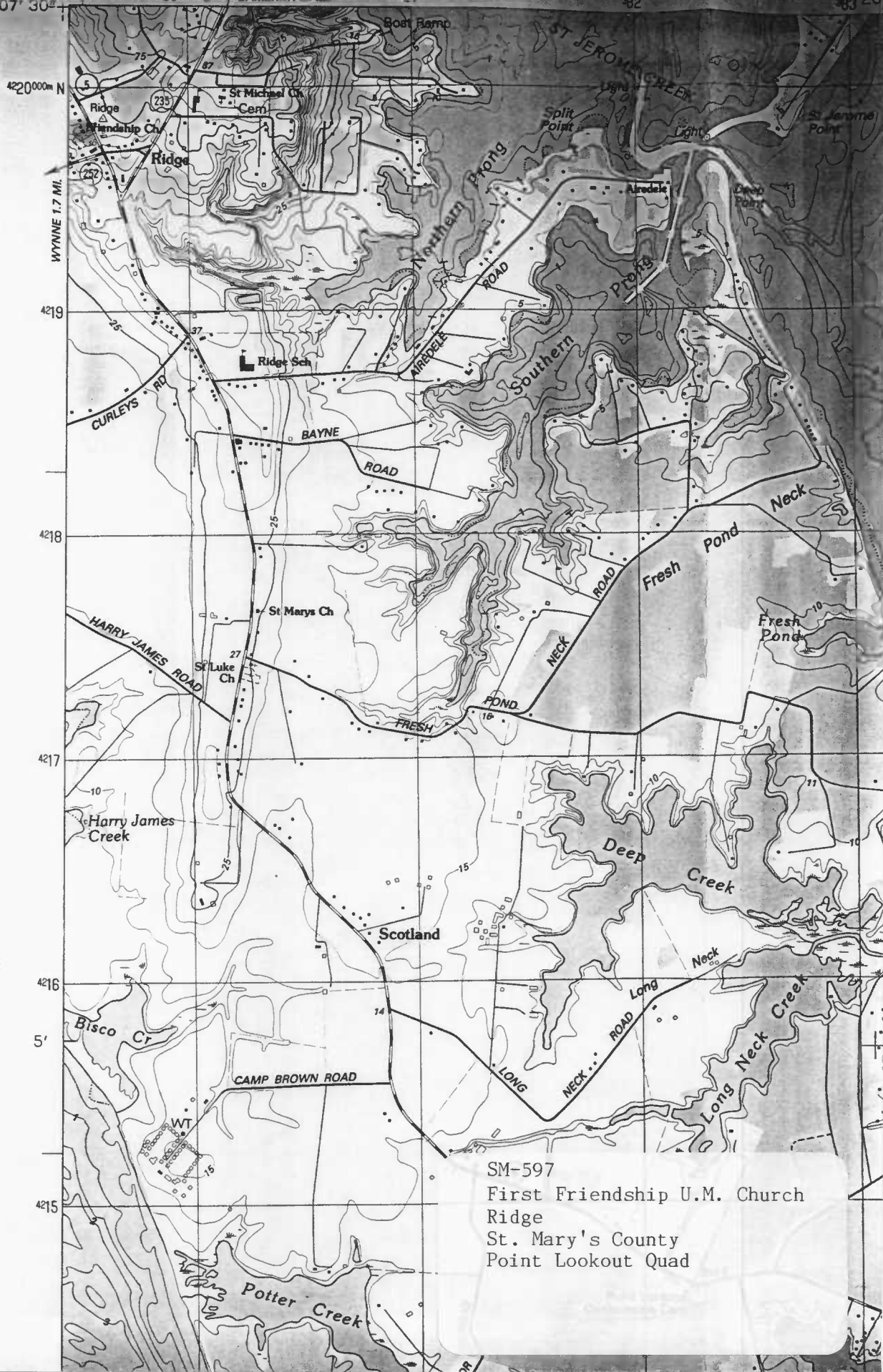
380000m E

LEXINGTON PARK 12 MI.
DAMERON 20 MI.

381

382

383 20



SM-597

First Friendship U.M. Church
Ridge
St. Mary's County
Point Lookout Quad



SM-597

First Friendship U.M. Church

St. Mary's County

Kirk Panzetta

Nov., 1997

F + N elevation

1 of 3



SM-597

First Friendship U.M. Church

St Mary's County

Kirk Ranzetta

Nov., 1997

Md SHPO

S + W elevation

2 of 3



SH-397

First Friendship B.M. Chapel

St. Mary's County

Kirk Ranzetta

Nov. 1997

Md SHPO

Interior - looking W

3 of 3